

In the Claims

1. A method of making a carbon foam material comprising providing a carbon foam precursor, heating said carbon foam precursor to remove a portion of the volatiles therefrom and create a partially devolatilized precursor extract, effecting said heating in an inert gas environment in a sealed vessel, cooling said devolatilized coal extract, converting said devolatilized extract into a powder, introducing said powder into a sealed vessel, foaming said devolatilized coal extract in said vessel by heating it at a pressure of less than about 20 atmospheres, and cooling said foamed material.
2. The method of claim 1 including effecting said foaming in an inert gas environment.
3. The method of claim 1 including effecting said partial devolatilization under an inert gas environment.
4. The method of claim 1 including effecting said foaming under an inert gas environment.
5. The method of claim 1 including effecting said foaming at a pressure of about 0.5 to 1.5 atmospheres.
6. The method of claim 5 including effecting said foaming at a temperature of about 330° to 600° for about 1 minute to 6 hours.
7. The method of claim 6 including effecting said heating to devolatilize said carbon foam precursor to a temperature of about 100° to 720°C.
8. The method of claim 6 including

creating said devolatilized carbon foam precursor powder with a size of about 10 to 325 mesh.

9. The method of claim 1 including effecting by said partial devolatilization of said carbon foam precursor alteration of the fluid nature of the matrix of said heated carbon foam precursor.
10. The method of claim 1 including employing bituminous coal as said carbon foam precursor.
11. The method of claim 1 including employing coal extract as said carbon foam precursor.
12. The method of claim 11 including employing a material selected from the group consisting of de-ashed coal extract and un-ashed coal extract as said carbon foam precursor.
13. The method of claim 1 including employing mesophase pitch as said carbon foam precursor.
14. The method of claim 1 including employing petroleum based pitch as said carbon foam precursor.
15. The method of claim 1 including effecting by said partial devolatilization removal of a portion of the internal blowing agent from said carbon foam precursor.
16. The method of claim 1 including after said partial devolatilization, but before said foaming, storing said devolatilized powder.
17. The method of claim 1 including after said devolatilizing, but before said foaming, oxidizing said powder.
18. The method of claim 3 including employing stagnant inert gas as said inert gas environment.
19. The method of claim 3 including

- employing flowing inert gas as said inert gas environment.
20. The method of claim 4 including
employing stagnant inert gas as said inert gas environment.
21. The method of claim 4 including
employing flowing inert gas as said inert gas environment.
22. A method of making a carbon foam material comprising
providing a carbon foam precursor,
creating a powder of said precursor,
heating said powdered carbon foam precursor at a pressure of
about 0.5 to 1.5 atmospheres at a temperature of about 20° C to 500°C for about 1
minute to 72 hours to effect oxidation thereof,
heating said oxidized carbon foam precursor in an inert gas
environment at a pressure less than 20 atmospheres to a temperature of about 330°C
to 600°C to foam said powdered precursor, and
cooling said foam to room temperatures.
23. The method of claim 22 including
effecting said foaming in an inert gas environment.
24. The method of claim 22 including
employing bituminous coal as said carbon foam precursor.
25. The method of claim 22 including
employing coal extract as said carbon foam precursor.
26. The method of claim 22 including
employing a material selected from the group consisting of de-
ashed coal extract and un-ashed coal extract as said carbon foam precursor.
27. The method of claim 22 including
employing hydrogenated coal extract as said carbon foam
precursor.
28. The method of claim 22 including
employing hydrogenated coal extract as said carbon foam
precursor.

29. The method of claim 22 including
employing mesophase pitch as said carbon foam precursor.
30. The method of claim 22 including
employing petroleum based pitch as said carbon foam
precursor.
31. The method of claim 22 including
effecting said carbon foam precursor oxidation in the presence
of at least one material selected from the group consisting of water and steam.
32. The method of claim 22 including
devolatilizing said precursor prior to said oxidation.
33. The method of claim 22 including
creating said precursor powder in the range of about 10 to 325
mesh.
34. The method of claim 22 including
after said oxidation, but prior to said foaming, storing said
oxidized precursor.
35. The method of claim 22 including
effecting said foaming at a pressure of about 0.5 to 1.5
atmospheres.